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Viewing cable 09CAIRO892, AMBASSADOR RAISES RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, BLOGGERS AND

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

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Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09CAIRO892**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09CAIRO892	2009-05-21 12:20	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET	Embassy Cairo

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.almasryalyoum.com/node/464227>

VZCZCXRO9943
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 000892

SIPDIS

FOR NEA, NEA/ELA, DRL/NESCA AND DRL/IRF
NSC FOR KUMAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/21/2029

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [KIRF](#) [CASC](#) [EG](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RAISES RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, BLOGGERS AND
NGOS WITH INTERIOR MINISTER

REF: A. CAIRO 694
B. CAIRO 668
C. CAIRO 554
D. CAIRO 451
E. 08 CAIRO 451

Classified By: Ambassador Margaret Scobey for reason 1.4 (b).

11. KEY POINTS

-- (C) In a May 20 meeting with Interior Minister Habib Al-Adly, the Ambassador raised identity documents for Baha'is, and urged the release of a Coptic priest jailed for performing the wedding of a Christian convert who allegedly held forged identity documents.

-- (C) The Ambassador urged clemency for three jailed bloggers, and asked for MOI agreement to register three U.S. NGOs. She requested MOI agreement to continuing USG-funded police training, and GOE assistance locating 15-year old Amcit Sara El-Gohary.

-- (C) Minister Adly said that blogger Musad Abu Fagr supported criminal activities regarding Palestinians entering Egypt. He criticized the U.S. NGOs for operating without registration and for allegedly supporting the political opposition. Adly pledged to look into the other issues raised.

Religious Freedom Cases

12. (C) The Ambassador thanked the Minister for the MOI's May 20 issuance of birth certificates to Baha'is with a dash in the religion field. She asked for the issuance of identity cards for Baha'is with a dash in the religion field (ref B). Ambassador raised the case of Coptic priest , convicted and sentenced to a five-year prison term in October 2008 for performing the wedding of a Christian convert from Islam who allegedly used a forged identity card to establish her Christian identity (ref E). Ambassador asked whether the GOE could release Coptic priest on bail while he files an appeal. Adly said he would look into the case.

Clemency for Bloggers

13. (C) The Ambassador urged clemency for three bloggers currently in jail: Karim Amer, convicted and sentenced to a four-year prison term in December 2007 for insulting Islam and President Mubarak; Musad Abu Fagr, jailed in 2007 following his blog posts about the difficulties of the Sinai Bedouin; and Hany Nazir, jailed in October 2008 following blogging about issues sensitive to Islam and Christianity (ref C). The Minister responded that Abu Fagr supported criminal activities related to Palestinians entering Egypt. The Ambassador urged that their detentions be reviewed since there did not appear to be any prosecution underway.

Registering U.S. NGOs

14. (C) The Ambassador urged the Minister to agree to register three U.S. NGOs operating in Egypt: the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, and the International Federation for Electoral Systems. She noted that registration of these NGOs would be favorably received in Washington. Minister Adly replied that these organizations began working in Egypt before they were registered, and have supported the political opposition. He added that although the GOE issues these NGOs visas, "this doesn't mean they can be legally registered." The Ambassador pushed back, saying that these NGOs are very respectful of local law, and have worked closely with GOE entities such as the Supreme Election Commission.

Police Training and Counterterrorism

¶ 15. (C) The Ambassador requested MOI agreement to continuing USG-funded police training, and noted that the embassy had submitted a diplomatic note to the MFA on the subject (ref A). Adly said he would look into the issue. The Ambassador asked about press reports of the May 15 arrests of Muslim Brotherhood (MB) officials for money laundering. Adly said the MB has received foreign funds. He noted that the GOE would announce on May 22 the arrests of additional individuals involved in the February 22 Khan Al-Khalili bombing in Cairo (ref D). Adly said the group had received funds from France.

Consular Case and Diplomatic License Plates

¶ 16. (C) The Ambassador requested MOI assistance to locate 15 year-old Amcit Sara El-Gohary, abducted by her father in Egypt in 1997, so her mother can see her. She noted that U.S. television is now focused on the story. The mother is no longer seeking to have custody -- she simply wants to see her child. Adly said the MOI "will do our best." The Ambassador asked for MOI assistance in providing new diplomatic license plates for embassy employees at a location near the embassy. Adly said he would try to facilitate such an arrangement.

SCOBET